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THE TRADEGY OF A POSTER. ❧ CAROLYN WELLS.

Pinning up a new poster on the wall of his den, John Craig paused, looking at it. "Splendid thing," he said; "the pure crudity of that green gown against the solid gray—fine—now and then a poster is a poem."

The poster-girl stared at him. Her face, flawless, nearly featureless, was far from expressionless. Her yellow hair was a flat mass; not the kind of hairs that are numbered, except perhaps two or three coarse blue ones that served as outlines.

The green gown Craig admired was without seam or fold; it had no variableness, neither shadow of turning, but more strong blue lines threw it out from the thick gray background. Craig lit a cigarette, dropped into a chair and slowly gazed at her. Pure color is intoxicating and his head began to swim. "You are beautiful," he said softly, "I adore you."

So you see it was not the poster-girl's fault.

Her clever creator had criticised her; dissatisfied, he had corrected, rubbed out, redrawn, always censorious. Now she saw admiration.

She glanced quickly round the room. The conventional muddle of rugs and divans, books and pictures, pipes and mugs was all there, with occasional high lights of originality. More curiously she spied at her fellow-posters.

Personally selected, she thought, not bought in sets. It was something to be adored by a man of such discrimination in posters.

And so, partly in response to his rhapsodies, but more for that he saw and appreciated the merits she really possessed, she fell in love with John Craig.

Days passed. She seemed secure in his adoration. Entering the room, his first glance was hers. Tired, fagged, that glance brought always the light to his face. But she knew, none better, the ephemeral nature of her popularity. Her love brought instinctive jealousy. She singled out its objects; a Gibson and a Cheret poster. Craig admired both, she knew. But the Cheret was so badly placed—right next a Beardsley which made it tawdry. Surely a poster he loved, he would never hang so carelessly.

The Gibson girl, of course had drawing, lots of it, and hundreds of lines—but she, she had color! and Craig revelled in color. He couldn't care for that black and white against her own fervent tints. Gaslight now, and her gown radiantly blue.

"A gem," said Craig to some guests, "an epigram in color." The guests gave a polite passing glance and turned to laugh at a grinning gargoyle.

But Craig's backward look was her's; she was content.

Fearingly she watched the little square paper days torn off

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the calendar. For the coming month would bring new magazine posters, with who knew what intrepid color-schemes?

The day that John Craig came into the room without looking at her, she knew that her hour had come. Not a glance of his loved eyes her way. Taking advantage of a breeze from the open window, she fluttered a little to attract his attention. Failing, she caught a ray of sunshine on her yellow top, and threw it back at him. He was oblivious. He flung his stick and gloves anywhere and sat at the window. The poster-girl watched him hungrily. Complex emotions threatened the smooth color-planes of her mind. He drew a photograph from his breast-pocket. A photograph! She scrutinized from under her blue eyelashes.

The subject was a girl's carefully-modeled face and shadowed throat, with a suspicion of evening-dress somewhere down around the shoulders. Self-consciousness spoke in the eyes, and conventionality lurked in the upward tilt of the chin. No more color than the Gibson girl, and not half so much drawing. Of a higher social type than the Cheret woman, but not nearly so pretty. All this the poster-girl saw, but she saw, too, that Craig's soul bowed down before the smiling face.

A pale green chill struck her heart, and she waited hopelessly. Craig went out, and through the long evening and night she felt that triumphant smile across the dark. Next morning she saw again the hated pasteboard in all its inartistic glaziness and gold-script signature, and knew herself dethroned. Clearly but one course opened.

Already she heard the sweep-woman chumping along the corridor. Gently disengaging herself from her insecure pin, she slipped softly down into Craig's waste basket.

SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS.—VAN DER DATER

Among republished bits of choice literature, that both through beauty of composition and daintiness of binding recommend themselves as gifts in this holiday season are the various publications of Thomas B. Mosher in his Bibelot and Old World Editions.

In the first are The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam rendered into prose by Justin McCarthy, and a collection of lyrics chosen from the works of William Morris and entitled "The Defence of Guinevere."

In the introduction to his version of the Rubaiyat McCarthy explains that he has set it down in prose because "prose can give the meaning more nearly than any verse," also because it has not been done before and he recognizes the impossibility of competing with Fitz Gerald in verse. In running over the various editions of the great poem, he mentions